

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-22, 30-35 and 37-49 are pending in the application and stand rejected. Independent Claims 1, 8, 14, 15, 21, 37, 44, 46 and 48 have been amended to clarify that the invention includes a mechanism for cleaning emitter or first array electrodes. Support for this amendment can be found at paragraph 56 in the last sentence, for example, which describes one such cleaning mechanism. It is believed that no new matter has been added by way of amendment.


In the Office action all of the pending claims stand rejected as obviousness over *Lee* (US Pat. 4,789,801) on the basis that *Lee* teaches all of the second electrodes being at equal distance from the first array. It was admitted that *Lee* fails to teach placement of the inner electrodes at a distance farther downstream from the first array than the outermost second electrodes. Nevertheless, the Office action indicated that it would have been obvious to make such a placement as an "art-recognized variable determined by routine experimentation."

Applicants disagree with this position and request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants note that *Lee* was filed on March 6, 1980 and that *Lee* is also a joint inventor of the present invention which was first filed over 18 years later on November 5, 1998. It simply cannot be said that one of skill in the art would have appreciated the need for, or the significance of, such a modification to the invention disclosed by *Lee* in 1980. As indicated in the present application (see the abstract) the modification equalizes the electric fields created at the tip of each electrode within the second array and results in a reduction in ozone generation. Applicant does not intend to acquiesce in this rejection.

Nevertheless, to advance prosecution of the claims, each of the independent claims has been amended to require a cleaning mechanism for cleaning emitter electrodes which are also known as the first array of electrodes. This limitation further distinguishes the claims from *Lee* which fails to disclose or suggest a cleaning mechanism.

Applicants have made an earnest endeavor to place this application in condition for allowance and such action is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: November 7, 2005